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The Taliban's beheading of a Sikh in Peshawar for refusing to convert to Islam has prompted the United States religious freedom commission to call on the Pakistani government to protect its Sikh and other religious minorities.

Jaspal Singh, 29, and two others, Surjeet Singh and Gurvinder Singh, were kidnapped in the afternoon of Jan. 11. Jaspal Singh's body was found on the night of Feb. 20.

"I was horrified to learn of the brutal beheading... by members of the Taliban, and I offer my condolences to the families," said Knox Thames, policy director of the **United States Commission for International Religious Freedom**.

"There are indications that this was more than a kidnapping for ransom that ended in murder. Some reports indicated it may have also been religiously motivated, as the (victim) may have been beheaded for failing to renounce their religion and convert to Islam."